

CHAPTER 372

(House Bill 209)

AN ACT concerning

Assistance in Voting

FOR the purpose of providing that certain persons who require assistance to vote may be given assistance by a person of the voter's choice, ~~either--than~~ excluding certain persons; and providing the procedure by which such assistance may be obtained and provided.

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

Article 33 - Election Code
Section 16-12 and 27-2(b)
Annotated Code of Maryland
(1976 Replacement Volume and 1982 Supplement)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article 33 - Election Code

16-12.

(a) With the aid of the diagrams authorized in § 16-10(c)(1) of this article and the mechanically operated model, the judges, if requested by the voter, shall instruct each such voter, before he enters the voting machine booth, regarding the operation of the machine, and shall give the voter opportunity personally to operate the model.

(b) [No assistance in marking ballots or operating the voting machine shall be given, except to voters who are blind, have impaired vision or are otherwise incapable from physical disability from marking the ballot or operating the voting machine.] ANY VOTER WHO REQUIRES ASSISTANCE TO VOTE BY REASON OF BLINDNESS, DISABILITY, OR INABILITY TO READ THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE OR WRITE MAY BE GIVEN ASSISTANCE BY A PERSON OF THE VOTER'S CHOICE, ~~ETHER--THAN~~ NOT TO INCLUDE THE VOTER'S EMPLOYER OR AGENT OF THAT EMPLOYER OR OFFICER OR AGENT OF THE VOTER'S UNION.

(c) (1) Assistance in marking their ballots or operating a voting machine shall be given to voters who shall declare under oath to the judges that by reason of blindness, [impaired vision or other physical] disability, OR INABILITY TO READ THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE OR WRITE they are unable without assistance to mark their ballots or operate the voting machine. No ballot shall be marked under this section or voting machine operated until a majority of the judges shall be satisfied of the truth of the